



VETERANS TRUST FUND OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Board Meeting Minutes

14 March 2018

- I. **Call to Order:** The Board Meeting of the SC Veterans' Trust Fund (VTF) was called to order at 1:00PM, by Mr. James A. White, Chairman.

- II. **Attendance:**
 - A. Present: James White, Dale Ellenburg, James Brown, Howard Metcalf, Valerie Brunson, Jimmy Hawk, Robin Ghent, Chris Maddox, Ronnie Taylor, John D. "JD" Wilcox, Jr.
 - B. Absent: Bevin Studstill, Calvin Lewis, Gloria Evans, Jim Lorraine

- III. **Minutes:** Minutes from the 15 November 2017 Meeting were read and approved by those in attendance.

- IV. **Guest speaker:** Mr. Wilcox introduced Mr. Samuel S. Hook with The Palladian Group. The Palladian Group is a full service public relations firm and has been in business for 20 years. They own their own production company and do digital work (websites, advertising).
 - A. VTF does great work now, but no one knows about it. Need to take us and put the VTF light on top of the basket. Could put ads in social media, direct mail, and person to person. He also suggested making videos of the various organizations the VTF has made donations to and put on the VTF website.
 - B. Mr. Wilcox said the VTF was sensitive to cost. Karen Boyd, CEO and Founder, could meet with a small group to discuss wants and needs, which would give an idea of cost, and then present to the full Board. They work on a monthly retainer.
 - C. Mr. White asked if they were involved with any other SC businesses. Mr. Hook explained they have worked with the SC State Museum and another entity on the 4th floor of the Edgar A. Brown Building. They have worked with the state and did an even that cleared almost \$100,000. They are working with a local hospital in Spartanburg to raise \$150,000. Worked with a not-for-profit in Greenville and raised over a million.

- D. It was suggested that the Finance Committee and the Funding/Resourcing Committee work together on this proposal.

V. Old Business:

A. Investment Options, presented by Mr. Brown:

Progress has been made in three areas: fundraising, investments, and state appropriations.

1. Investments: Mr. Brown sent a letter to South State Bank, Bank of America, Regions Bank, Wells Fargo, and First Citizens asking that they submit an intent to render services. Responses were received from BB&T, Regions, and First Citizens

- a. Finance Committee met with BB&T four times regarding investment opportunities.
- b. Ryan Investment Management also provided information.
- c. This will be addressed at the next meeting. Need to look at who is best suited.

2. Rep. James Smith met with the VTF and discussed his support of the VTF. He has requested a synopsis of who the VTF is and what it does. Saying that there are 500,000 veterans in South Carolina, the VTF is asking for \$1 per veteran. Mr. Brown asks that board members reach to legislators they may know requesting their support. It was discussed and decided by those present

3. Mr. Ellenburg stated he would like to invite Carolina Wealth Management to speak to the VTF and would send him a copy of the request for proposal.

4. Mr. Brown advised those present that the Finance Committee will meet and make a recommendation to the full board.

B. Mrs. Ghent provided information on the advertising costs for the SCVets magazine. Mr. White asked that it be sent again to all board members asking for their thoughts/vote on whether or not to participate.

C. All future meetings will be held at 1205 Pendleton Street, Room 415, Columbia, SC 29201 unless there is a conflict. If a conflict occurs, meetings will be held at The American Legion, Department of South Carolina.

VI. New Business:

A. Secretary's Report: No report at this time.

1. Large dry-erase presentation check has been seen by all.

2. Reports on grants previously awarded were presented to members of the board.

- a. If an organization failed to spend all monies donated, they should be returned to the VTF.

- b. Need to include pictures provided on the VTF website.

3. All board members present were reminded of the deadline for filing Statement of Economic Interests.

B. Treasurer's Report by Mr. Brown: A Treasurer's Report was presented to the members.

C. Committee Reports:

1. Public Relations:
 - a. Mr. Brown, President of the Veterans Advocacy Council (VAC), invited the VTF to participate in the Veterans Resource Fair on 24 April 2018 at the State House. He explained the VAC consisted of representation from the Veteran Service Organizations and this would be their 9th event.
 - i. Board decided to participate in the Veterans Resource Fair.
 - ii. Ms. Brunson will fix a table.
 - iii. Ms. Ghent will check on the cost of getting a banner for display, not only at the Veterans Resource Fair, but for future events. It was decided that the VTF could spend up to \$100 for the banner
 - b. Website: Mr. Hook suggested updating the VTF website.
 2. Grant Management Committee:
 - a. Received one grant request today from Colleton County Veterans Council.
 - b. Need to follow By-Laws when it comes to making donations, not grants, to organizations. Mr. White suggested revisiting the By-Laws to make sure they are consistent and are something that can be worked with; they need to be flexible. He wants to be on the committee to review the By-Laws.
 3. Funding/Resourcing Committee: No report at this time; however, Mr. Maddox suggested that the Funding/Resourcing committee also work with the Public Relations Committee.
- D. Election of Officers:
- Mr. White said it has been a pleasure to serve as the Chairman of the VTF for the last two years, but now was the time for the members to nominate someone new. While a lot of work has been accomplished, there is room for improvement: need to look at the By-Laws, committee memberships, need to look for new people to add to the Board, and new ideas. The VTF has been in existence for twenty-two years now. He then opened the floor for nominations.
1. Mr. Maddox nominated Mr. Hawk, Mr. Wilcox seconded this. This was accepted unanimously by all members present. Mr. Hawk asked Mr. White to conduct the rest of the meeting.
 2. Other positions will be voted on at a later meeting.
 3. Mr. White suggested looking at all the committees and doing a rotation of the board members. He believes that board members should be familiar with all the positions of the VTF. Mr. White asked people to consider serving on other committees, which would be discussed at a later meeting.
- E. Miscellaneous:
1. Mr. Wilcox provided an article from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, "VA partners with Department of Energy on big-data initiative to improve health care for Veterans."
 2. Mr. Wilcox was at a dinner sponsored by the Kershaw County Historical Society, Ralph Norman was also in attendance. Stated there were a lot of things going on with veterans.

3. Mr. Wilcox also attended the Camden Film Festival several weeks ago. There were several films related to veterans with PTSD and different types of therapy. He noted the equine therapy seemed to be really useful.

VII. Identification of Next Meeting: The next meeting of the Board of the Veterans' Trust Fund of South Carolina will be 16 May 2018 in Room 415, 1205 Pendleton Street, Columbia, SC.

VIII. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned.

p.p. Bevin Studstill
Bevin Studstill, Secretary

29 May 2018
Date of Approval

James A. White
James A. White, Chair
Veterans' Trust Fund of South Carolina

MAY 23, 2018
Date of Approval